

WEST MORGAN SMALL AREA STUDY



Briefing Book
Draft
April 23, 2010

Acknowledgments : list of attendees

Special Thanks: Pullen Arts Center, Irregardless Cafe, Hillsborough CAC, NCSU Downtown Design Studio

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Objective: The overall objective of the West Morgan Area Study is to provide predictable expectations of how the West Morgan neighborhood and surrounding area should be developed.

Outcome: The study will provide information that will guide the creation of land use classification consistent with the intent of the 2030 Comprehensive Plan, an update to the Future Land Use Map (FLUM), potentially resulting in a city-initiated zoning proposal and map amendment. Transportation recommendations may lead to an amendment to the Thoroughfare Map. This study will also test the potential to create form based code regulations related to a Pedestrian Business Overlay District (PBOD).

PHASE 1.0 INFORMATION GATHERING

Project Briefing Book

Purpose: To gather all pertinent information related to the study area and immediately adjacent areas. This task will be used to create a document containing all pertinent information, maps, and early character inventories the area. Early coordination will be required within the department and possibly with outside entities to compile data.

PHASE 2.0 PUBLIC OUTREACH

Focus Groups

Purpose: Involve the relevant stakeholders to create a vision for the study area. A team comprised of members of the Core Project Team will assist with the preparation of informational material to educate and answer potential questions from the public.

Public Engagement Process

Purpose: Provide the public with information on issues relating to zoning, future land use, and the potential of connecting to mass transit and collect initial public response. Conduct a series of three focus group workshops, and one Charrette/Workshop facilitated by the team. The public will be given the opportunity to address their

concerns and relay their vision for the future development of the area. Informational material will be used to educate and answer potential questions from the public.

PHASE 3.0 ANALYSIS

Evaluate Data for Opportunities and Constraints

Purpose: Review the data collected for the study area to determine the best locations and types of rezoning, Pedestrian Overlay Business Districts, and any and all changes required to the Future Land Use Map as implemented November 1, 2009. Using data gathered during task 1.1, determine the positive features that can be enhanced within the neighborhood. The data should also be used to list major issues that may impede the objectives of the plan.

TASK 4.0 DRAFT STUDY

Draft Plan, Policies & Actions

Purpose: Develop plan, policies and recommended actions for the study area Draft goals and policies will be developed using the analyzed data from task 2.0, and comments received during task 3.0. Character sketches (hand-drawn vignettes and/or 3D massing models) and diagrams will provide examples of proposed alternatives.

Report Preparation

Purpose: Create a draft study that includes the following elements: intent, boundary description, existing character of the area, policy framework, identified issues, goals/ vision, policies, and outcomes.

TASK 5.0 FINAL STUDY

Draft Plan Refinement

Purpose: Incorporate internal and external comments on the draft study to finalize study content. Refine the draft study that includes the following elements: intent, boundary description, existing character of the area, policy framework, identified issues, goals/ vision, policies, and outcomes.

Adoption Process

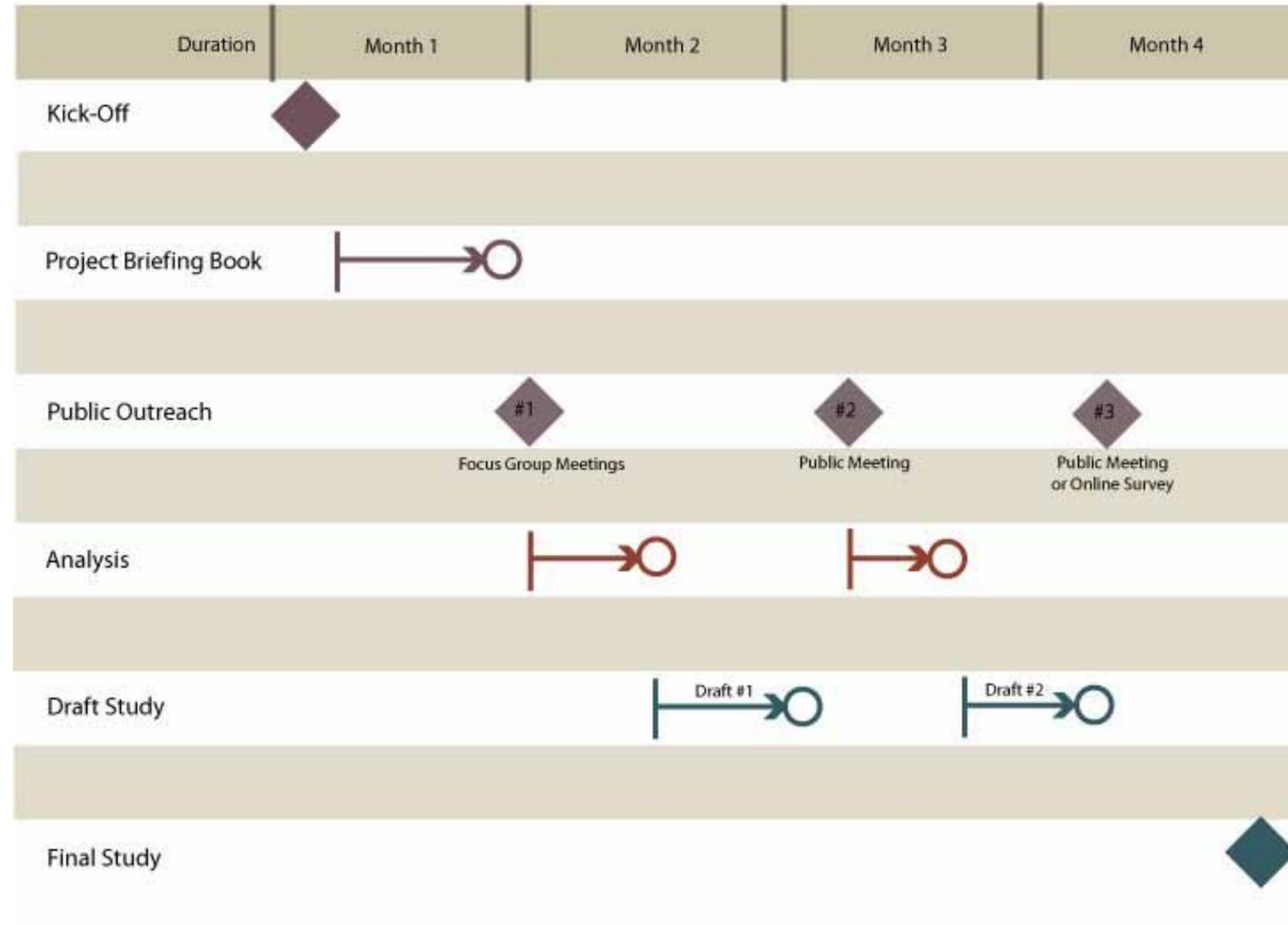
Purpose: Present study results in final form to the public and city officials. Outline clear recommendations regarding future land uses, transportation and implementation.

Scope of Work

Project Team Members:

Role	Responsibility
Grant Meacci	Lead Urban Designer
Roberta Fox	Urban Designer
Trisha Hasch	Public Outreach Planner
Carter Pettibone	Urban Planner
Elizabeth Alley	Urban Planner
James Marapoti	Current Planner
Dhanya Sandeep	Long Range Planner
Eric Lamb	Transportation Planner
Frank Holyfield	Graphic Design
Rachel Mukai	Landscape Designer

Project Schedule



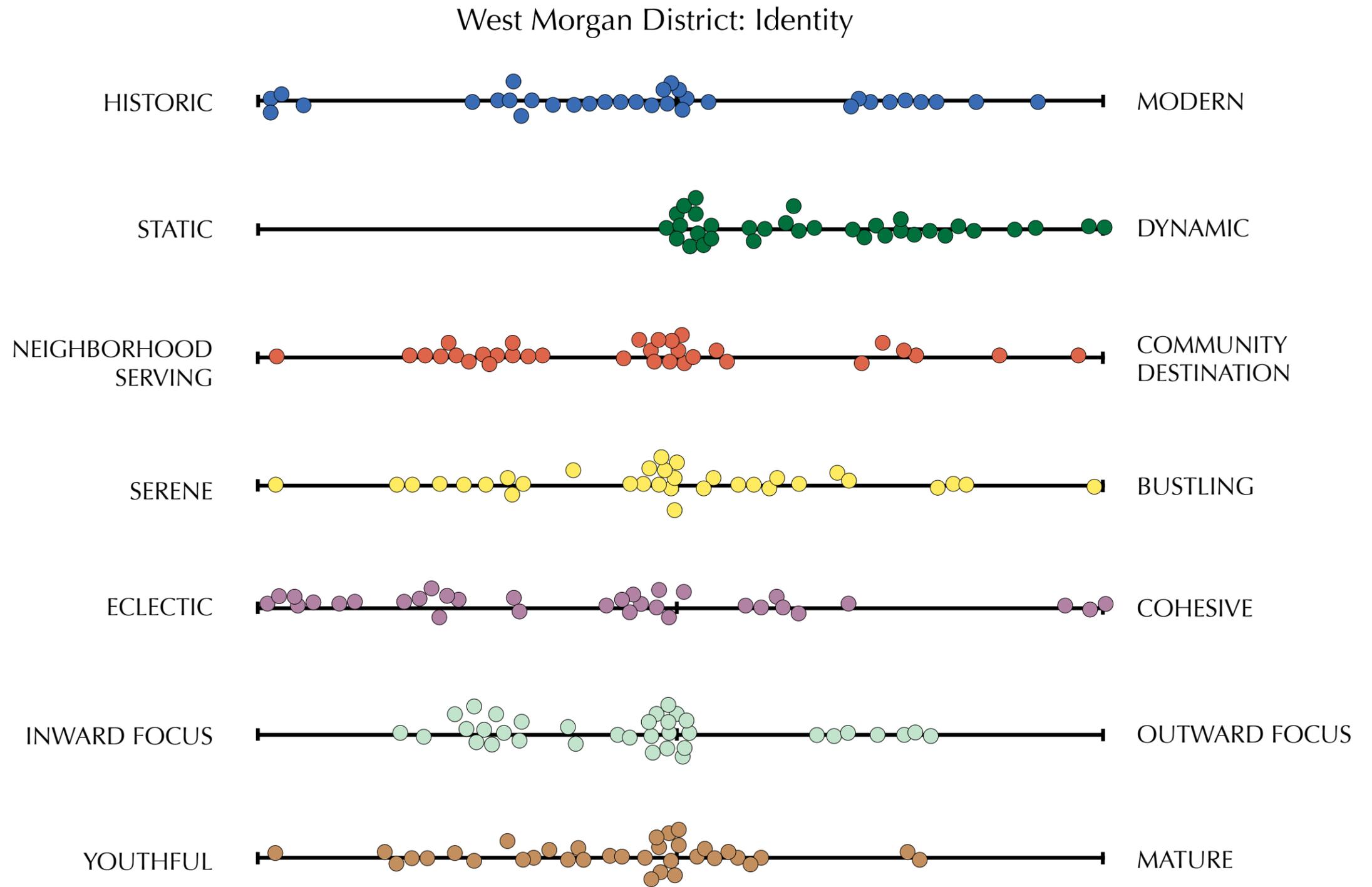
Issue	Focus Group Questions
Neighborhood Character	<p>What are the physical character defining elements for the district?</p> <p>Are there elements now that should be kept improved upon to define the future. Iconic elements/landmarks?</p> <p>Built environmental characteristics?</p>
Public Realm/Streetscape	<p>What are the different street typologies? What improvements can be made to promote Pedestrian safety? Lighting?</p> <p>Accessibility/connectivity?</p> <p>How does the streetscape respond to the adjacent land use?</p>
Parking	<p>What strategy would solve current parking issues? What guidelines should be developed for future development? How is the parking designated?</p>
Open Space	<p>Private VS. Publically Accessible. Is the location and need for public open space?</p> <p>How should Public/private open space interact?</p> <p>What other forms can open space take in the district? What is usable open space constructed?</p>
Height/Setbacks/Bulk/Mass/Modulation	<p>Is there a one height fit all solution or does it vary for different blocks?</p> <p>Should there be footprint limits? Modulation requirements?</p>

Thoroughfares/Multimodal Transit/Infrastructure	<p>What other circulation issues need to be considered? Bike, traffic, pedestrian.</p> <p>Does fixed guideway transit change character? Morgan or Hargett? Is there a preference?</p> <p>Are there improvements to the bus service? Stops, routing, schedules, shelters (quantity or quality of stop amenities.</p> <p>Road width and traffic projections? Connections to adjacent districts and What can our infrastructure accommodate?</p> <p>Are the number of cut-throughs for traffic creating a problem?</p> <p>Are there issues with the current road crossections?</p> <p>What improvements need to be made?DT?</p>
Land use/Future Land Use/Density	<p>Is the current mix of land uses compatible with the neighborhood?</p> <p>What future land categories should be considered?</p> <p>If we regulate bulk and height do we need to regulate density?</p>
Zoning & Overlay Districts	<p>Should there be base zoning and/or overlay district amendments to promote use and character</p>

Key Issues & Themes

District Identity

Attendees of the two focus group meetings, outlined in the public outreach strategy, were guided through a series of discussion points in order to facilitate and illicit descriptions and comment on the identity of the west morgan district. The dot distribution diagram depicts how the group defined the area in terms of the quality descriptions listed in the columns to the left and right of the horizontal scale. Where dots are gathered, consensus on a particular balance of qualities was evident. Dots that isolated or spread evenly across the spectrum were used as discussion points to understand the underlying issue behind why a specific quality was chosen. The results of this discussion are found in the summarized focus group meeting notes and were used to develop a draft vision statement to guide the workshop.



Residents Summary—Common Themes and Consensus

Pullen Arts Center, March 23, 2010

Common themes expressed by the group focused on neighborhood character and creating a high quality of life for all who live, visit, and do business in the area. A desire for a high quality of life throughout the community was the subtext to comments and discussions about land use, parking, building heights, set backs, public realm, open space, streets and thoroughfares, and multimodal adaptability. The major success indicator would create a healthy public realm suitable to supporting a diverse residential community and a successful local economy.

There was consensus that moving forward there is a need to sustain the human scale and historic context of the community. New development, including residential and mixed-use projects, should respect that current scale. Within this context, plans should aim to produce urban vitality, be family- and pedestrian-friendly, generate walkable and bikeable streets, and produce easily accessible green space in both the public realm and in new private development. Another measure of success to consider would be the community's ability to attract a diverse population that would find housing affordability throughout all stages of their lives.

Development objectives need to consider parking, building heights, and set backs. Suggestions were made to increase on-street parking and limit lot numbers and size. Building height recommendations ranged from 3-6 stories, based on context and extent of set backs, several feet for retail establishments and up to 15' for buildings in general.

Businesses and Property Owners Summary—Common Themes and Consensus

Irregardless Café, March 24, 2010

Common themes expressed by the group focused on the imperative to enhance the built environment in order to create a competitive community of residential home ownership options and conditions necessary for business success. Comprehensive transit in all its forms prevailed as a theme undergirding perceptions of the neighborhood's future.

Consensus formed around developing vacant buildings and land (without displacing current small businesses). Participants agreed that appropriate density, mixed use, small-scale shops and restaurants were preferable in the context of the current human scale, historic environment. Set backs and height would follow given the form of the particular project and its use.

Mobility in and out of the community generated agreement on the need for on-street parking (and the argument that there is unused capacity) and examination of current thoroughfares, anticipated traffic increases, and changes to two-way streets. A public realm that includes safe, adequate sidewalks is critical to creating customer traffic and a pedestrian-friendly gateway community to downtown. Multimodal accessibility followed with an emphasis placed on connectivity and expanded bike/pedestrian routes to Pullen Park and the Dorothea Dix property, buses, and R-line routes.

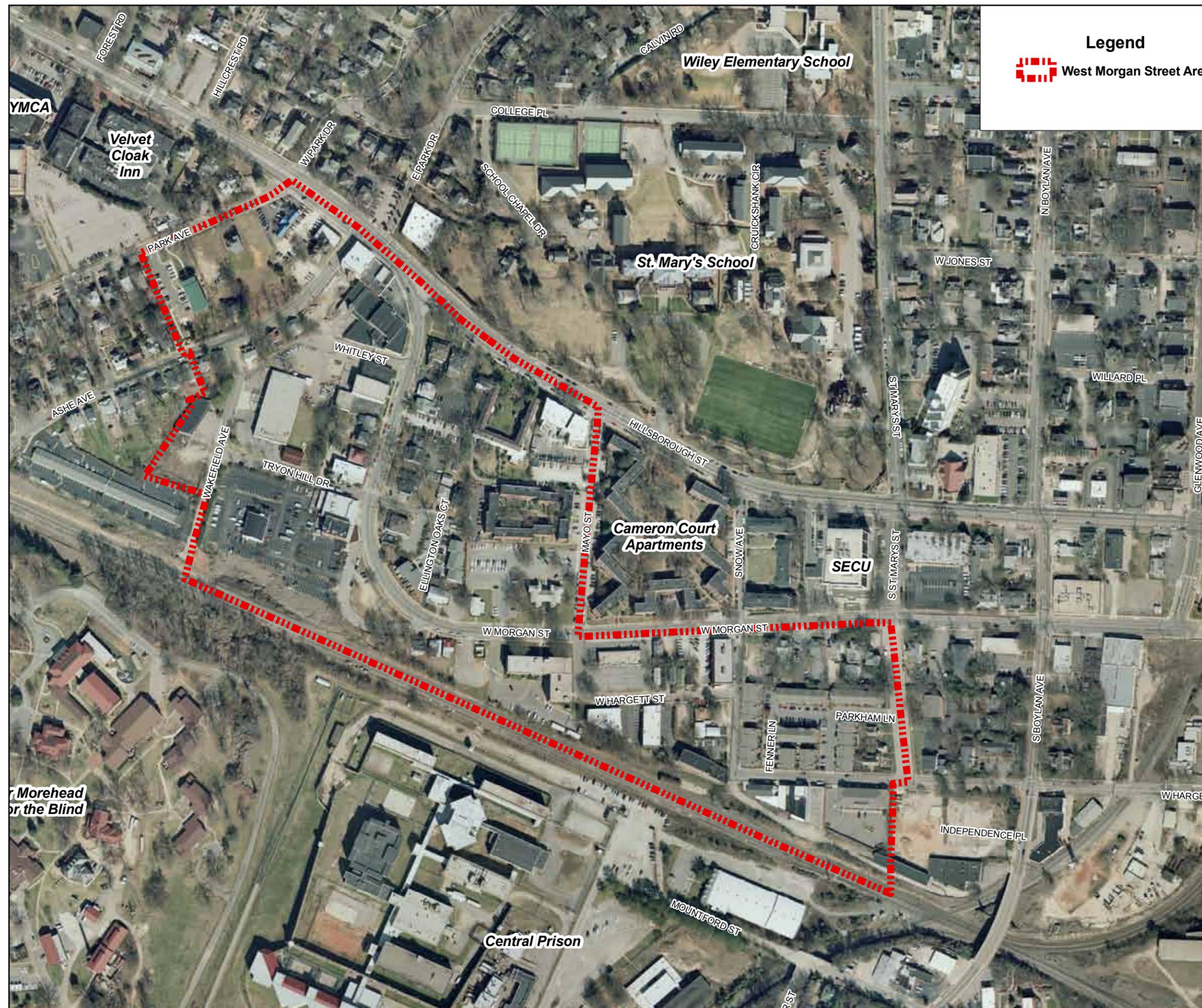
Social issues surfaced with a need to address long-time drug-use issues, an on-going need to support alternatives for the homeless population, and development of an urban design plan to replace unsafe alleys, niches, and streets with streetscapes that promote safety and welcome pedestrians.

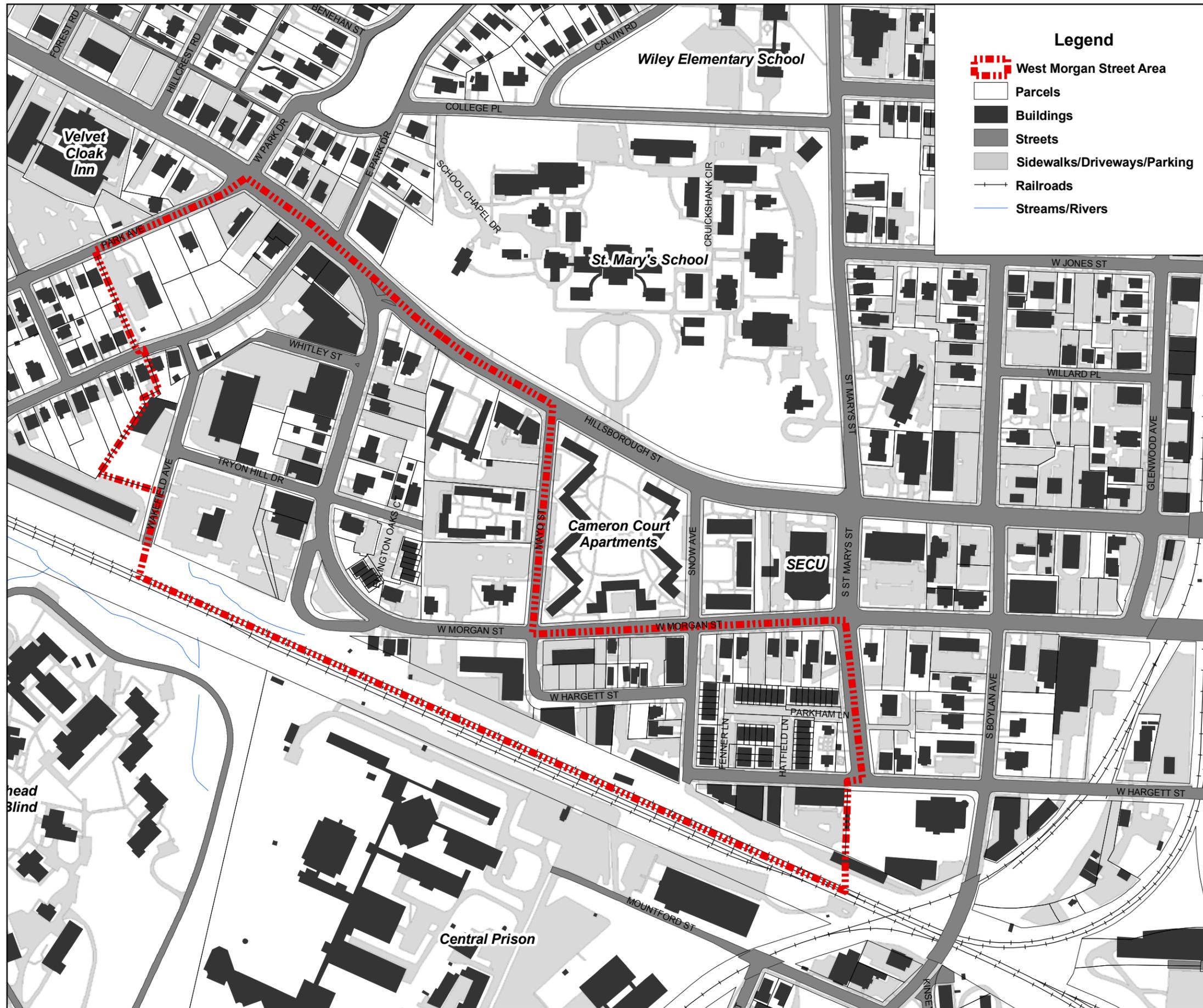
District Identity

Draft vision: The streets of West Morgan bustle with activity. The historic, dynamic, neighborhood-centered downtown community is known for its human scale environment of urban, well-built structures, successful small businesses, affordable housing, safety, easily accessible green space, and its pedestrian friendly priorities.

Special Study Area Boundary

The West Morgan Special Study Area was defined during the 2030 Comprehensive planning process as an area undefined by future land use. The area is defined by a specific boundary (outlined in red) and is generally defined by Hillsborough Street to the north, Park Avenue to the west, the railroad corridor to the south and St. Mary's Street to the east.



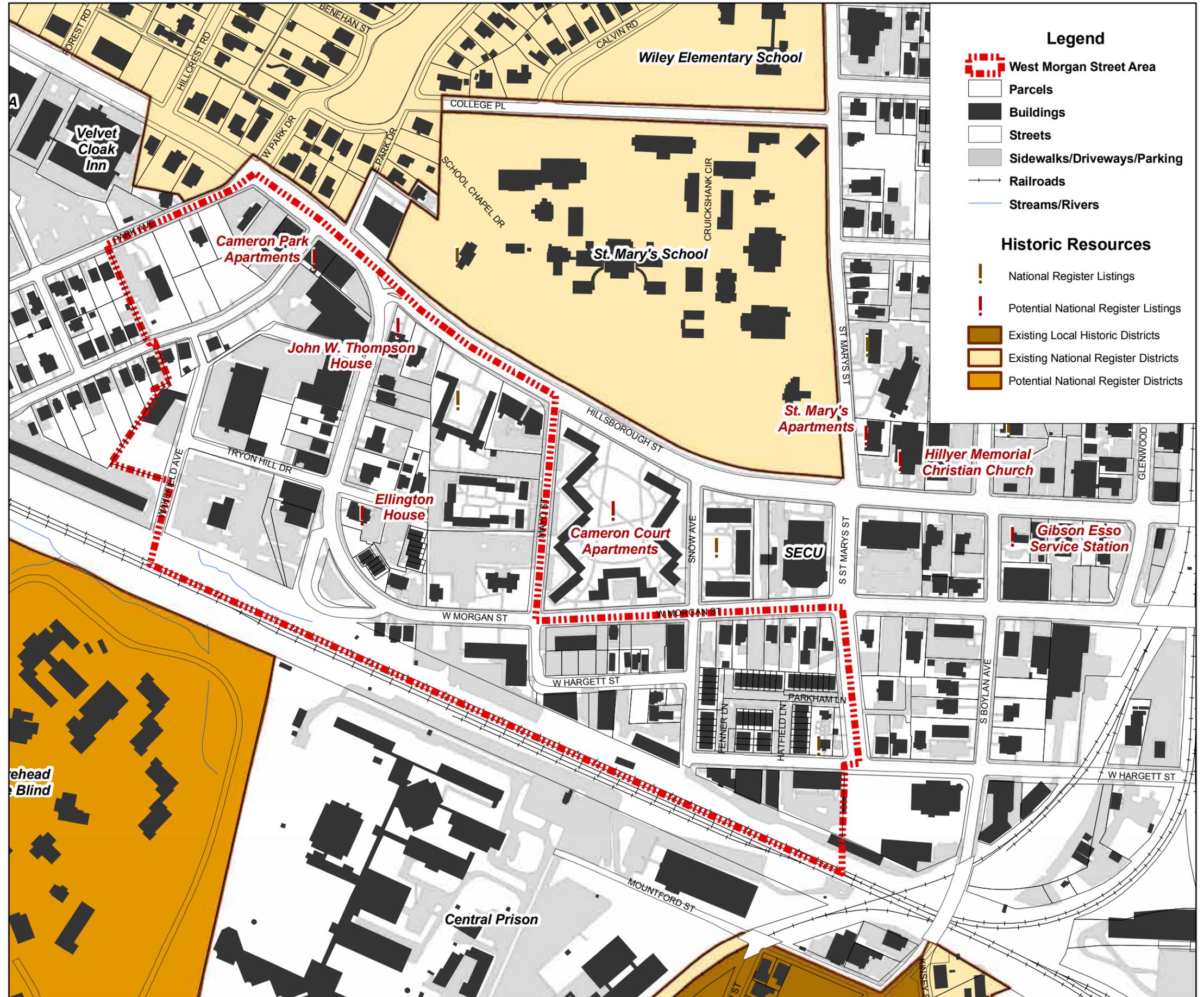


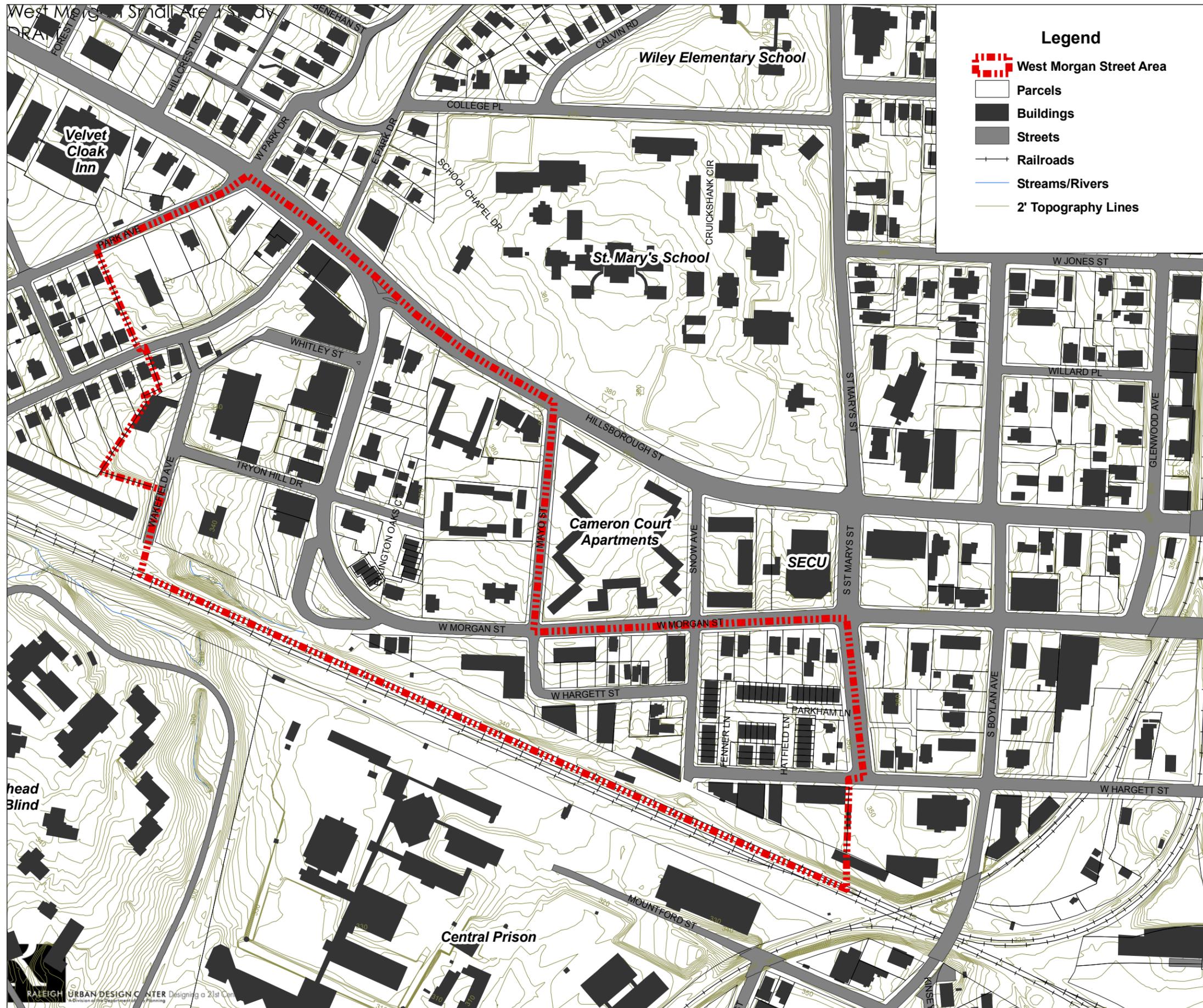
Planimetric

The study area, as depicted in this planimetric map, is largely comprised of buildings and surface parking. Approximately X% of the area is covered by buildings, Y% is covered by surface parking (both paved and gravel) and Z% remains both structured open space of vegetated area.

Cultural & Historic Resources

The area is peppered with many cultural and historic structures and landscapes. Dominated by the St. Mary's Campus and historic structures, the area has a significant number of post war apartment developments which add significantly to the scale, character and open space of the neighborhood. There also remain remnants of the single family neighborhood that predates the commercial and multi-family properties in the area. These homes, mostly converted to commercial/office use, can be found along Hillsborough and Morgan Streets and would have linked the Pullen Neighborhood found on Park and Ashe Avenue's with the few homes found on West Hargett in the vicinity of the historic Jane Lane property.

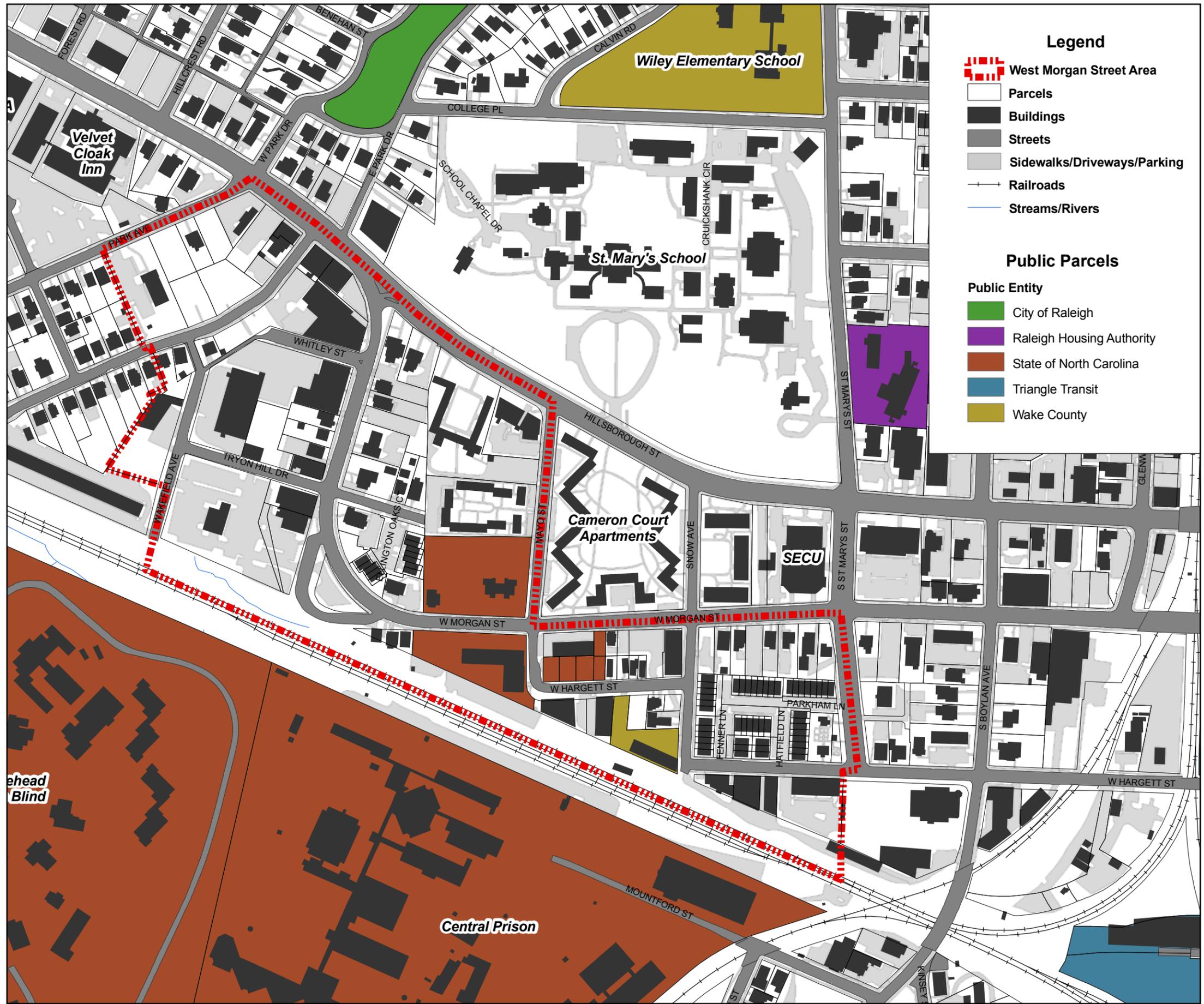




Topography

The topography in the study area is defined by a high point, associated with the St. Mary's campus and falls approximately 40' to the southern boundary along the railroad right of way and to the eastern boundary between Ashe and West Morgan Streets.

The gradient found in the study site generally falls between 4% to 8%.

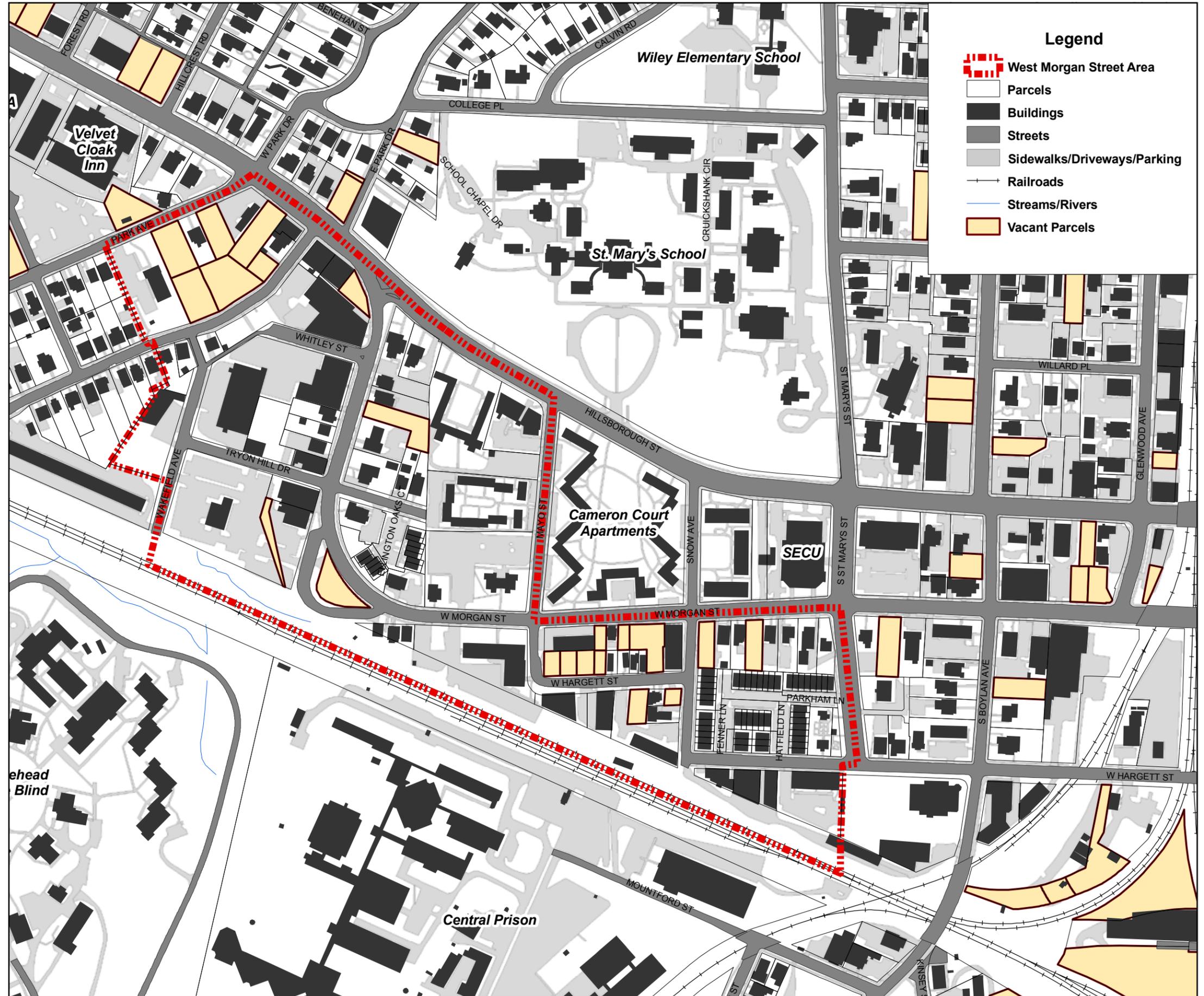


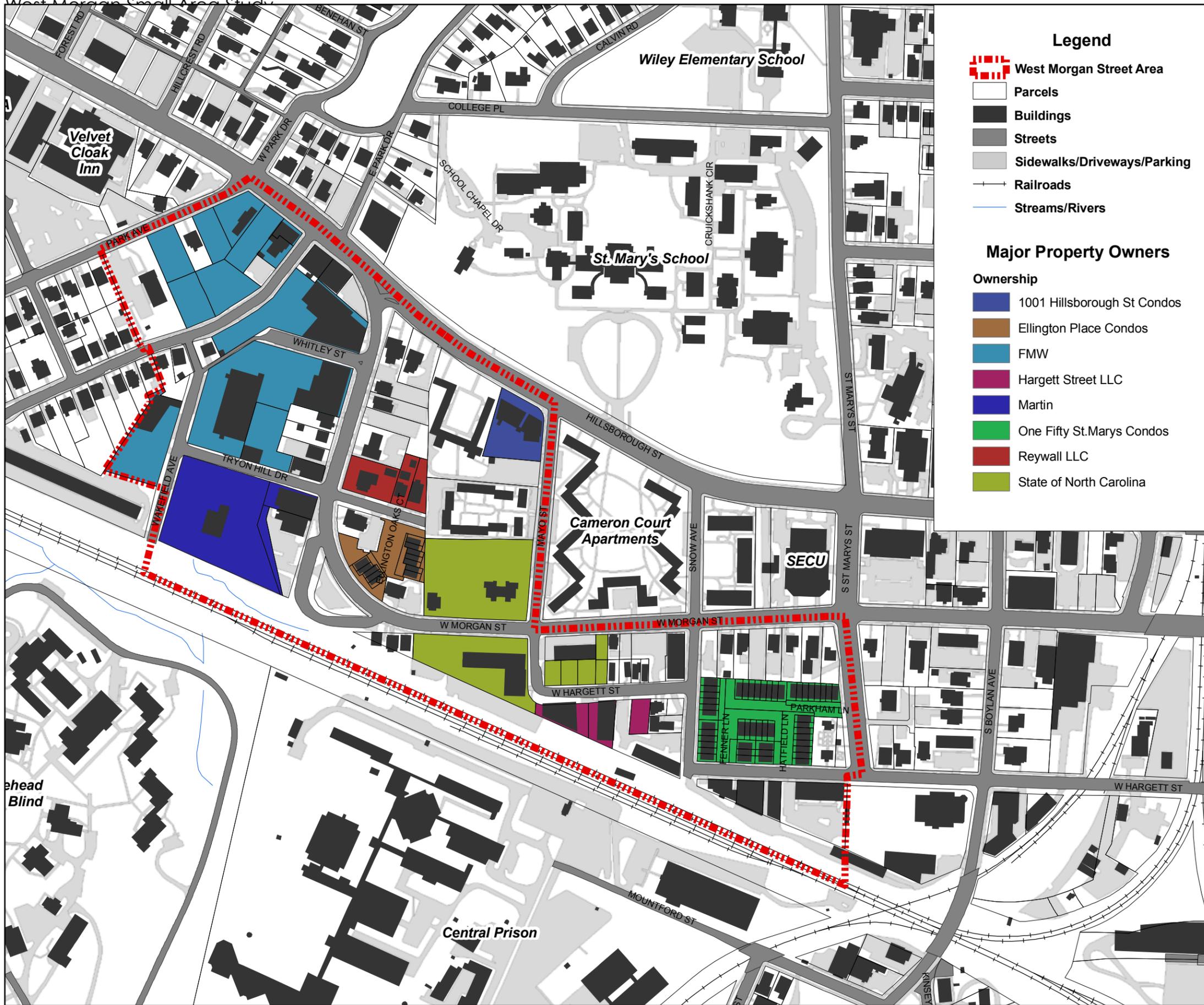
Public Parcels

Two public entities control property within the study area. The State Division of Prisons (shown in brown) own approximately 3 acres, used for administrative offices and parking. The remaining publicly owned parcel is owned by Wake County who operates a multi service center for homeless individuals.

Vacant Parcels

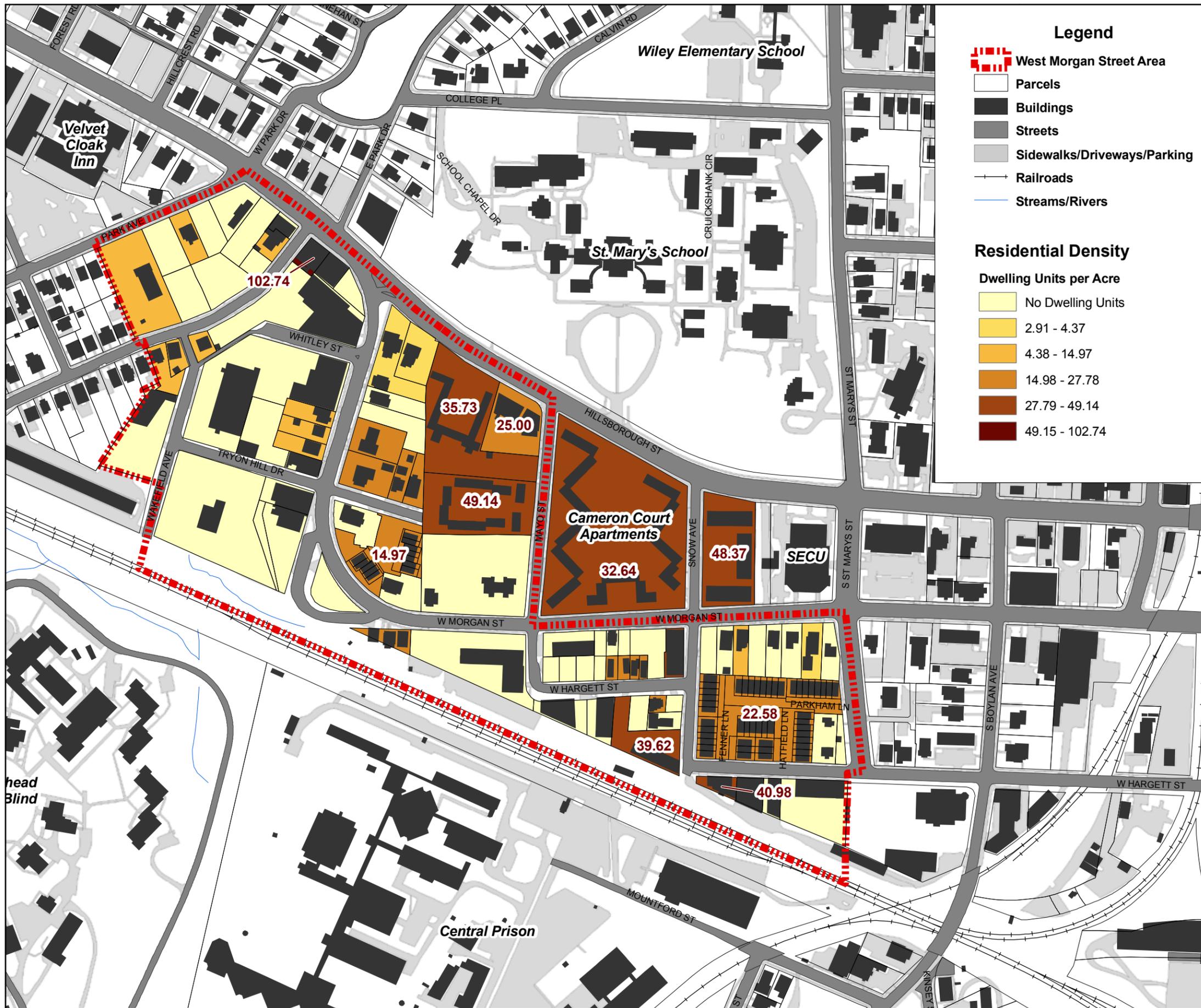
There are 21 identified vacant parcels within the West Morgan Study Area, concentrated primarily between Ashe Avenue and Park Avenue, and between West Morgan Street and Hargett Street west of Snow Street. Many of these vacant parcels are used as surface parking lots.





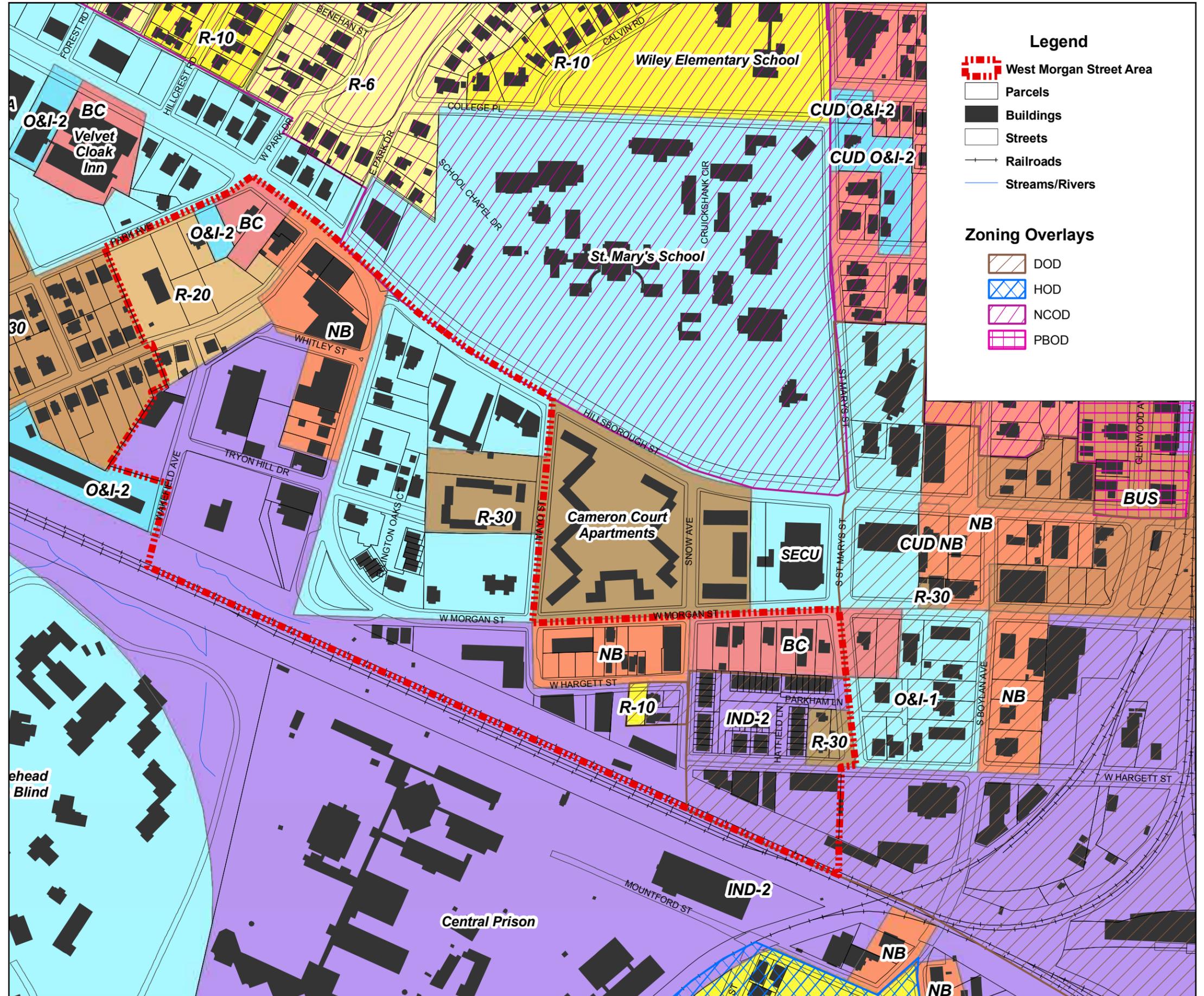
Property Owners

Land ownership is generally aggregated into three categories: private, public and condominium associates. The majority of aggregated land is owned by a private development company and the State of NC Division of Prisons. Other smaller aggregated ownership areas are private ownership groups and condominium associates.



Zoning

The study area is characterized by a number of different base zoning districts, as is reflected in the variety of land uses. There is a significant amount of land zoned Industrial-2 directly adjacent to residential uses. The eastern part of the study area is covered by the Downtown Overlay District.



Zoning District	Number of lots zoned	Density (units per acre)	Setbacks (feet)	Height (feet)	Free Standing Sign	F.A.R. (Floor Area Ratio)		Retail	Common Characteristics	Other Allowable Uses
Residential-10 (R-10)	1	10 (s/f and m/f)	Front Yard- 20, Side Yard- 5 (aggregate 15), Corner Lot- 20, Rear Yard- 20	40 (increase of 1 foot per 1 foot added in setback width)	Tract ID Sign	N/A	Y	N	Medium density, Single Family, apartment, townhomes	Condos, congregate care facilities
Residential-20 (R-20)	10	20 (s/f and m/f)	Front Yard- 20, Side Yard- 5 (aggregate 15), Corner Lot- 20, Rear Yard- 20	40 (increase of 1 foot per 1 foot added in setback width)	Tract ID Sign	N/A	Y	N	High density, apartment, townhomes, condos.	single family
Residential-30 (R-30)	4	30 (s/f and m/f)	Front Yard- 20, Side Yard- 5, Corner Lot- 20, Rear Yard- 20	40 (increase of 1 foot per 1 foot added in setback width)	Tract ID Sign	N/A	Y	N	High density, apartment, townhomes, condos.	single family
Office and Institution-1 (O&I 1)	17	15 (25 w/PC Approval) (s/f and m/f)	Front Yard- 30, Side Yard- 5, Corner Lot- 5, Rear Yard- 20	40 (increase of 1 foot per 1 foot added in setback width)	Low Profile Sign	0.75, building lot coverage of 25%	Y	Limited (maximum of 10%) permitted in association with an office building	Mixed use district intended for office and institutional use. Multifamily and group housing, parking lots, Office buildings. Very limited retail.	single family and cluster unit dev. Greater than 10 acres.
Office and Institution-2 (O&I 2)	1	15 (40 w/PC Approval) (s/f and m/f)	Front Yard- 30, Side Yard- 5, Corner Lot- 5, Rear Yard- 20 (Can be decreased with PC & CC Approval)	50 (Unlimited with PC&CC Approval)	Low Profile Sign	1.0, building lot coverage of 30%	Y	Limited (maximum of 10%) permitted in association with an office building	Mixed use district intended for intense development. Multifamily, and group housing, office buildings, parking lots.	single family and cluster unit dev. Greater than 10 acres.
Buffer Commercial (BC)	10	10 (s/f and m/f)	Front Yard- 30, Side Yard- 0, Corner Lot- 10-15, Rear Yard- 0	40 (increase of 1 foot per 1 foot added in setback width)	Medium Profile Sign	3,000 sq. ft. per floor per premise	Y	Y	Intended to regulate compatibility between small retail uses and adjacent low density residential uses. Convenient retail and restaurants with no outdoor activity. Offices and parking lots	Hotel and motel
Neighborhood Business (NB)	20	10 (s/f and m/f)	Front Yard- 30, Side Yard- 0, Corner Lot- (at least 10 but no more than 20), Rear Yard- 0	40 (increase of 1 foot per 1 foot added in setback width)	High Profile Sign	No maximum specified	Y	Y	Intended for neighborhood scale retail in close proximity to residential development. Typically located at major intersections. Convenient retail, food store, restaurant, clubs.	Residential and residential institutions, professional offices, commercial parking, hotel/motel.
Industrial-2 (I-2)	24	0	Front Yard- 0, Side Yard- 0, Corner Lot- 0, Rear Yard- 0	50 (increase of 1 foot per 1 foot added in setback width)	High Profile Sign	No maximum specified	Y if in DOD	Y	No minimum setbacks, buildings up to property lines. Intended for industrial development close to downtown. Permits office, retail and high density residential when located within DOD up to 320 units/acre. Convenient retail, restaurant, hotel,	

***Uses shown per zoning district are typical but not limited to, please look at use chart in code for exact use break down and applicable approving body

p.y.= Protective Yard

s/f = single family detached dwellings

m/f = multifamily and group housing

Low Profile Sign: max height = 3.5 feet, max size = 70 sq. ft.

Medium Profile Sign: max height = 10 feet, max size = 100 sq. ft OR max height = 15 feet, max size = 75 sq. ft.

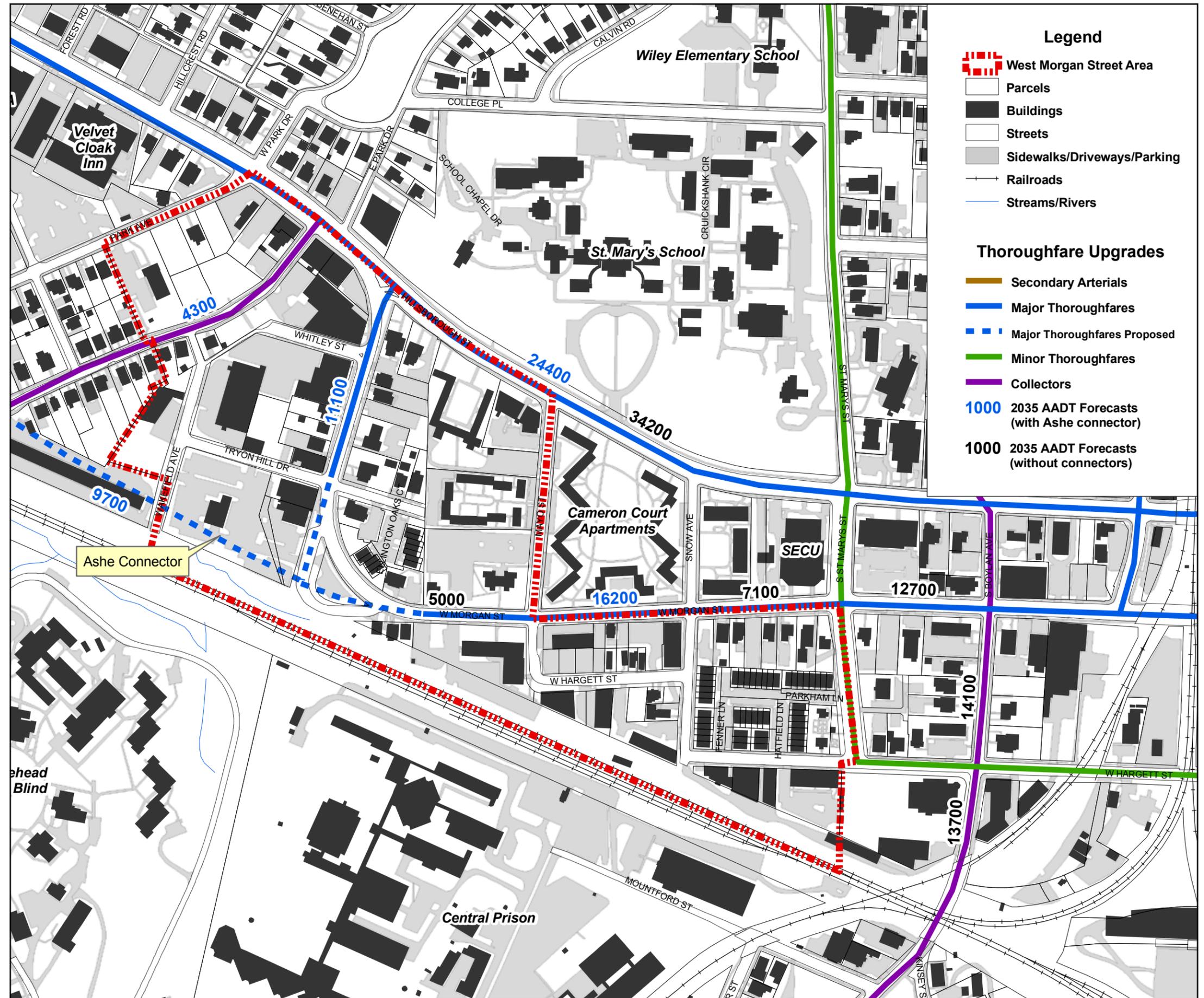
High Profile Sign: max height = 15 sq. ft., max size = 100 sq. ft.

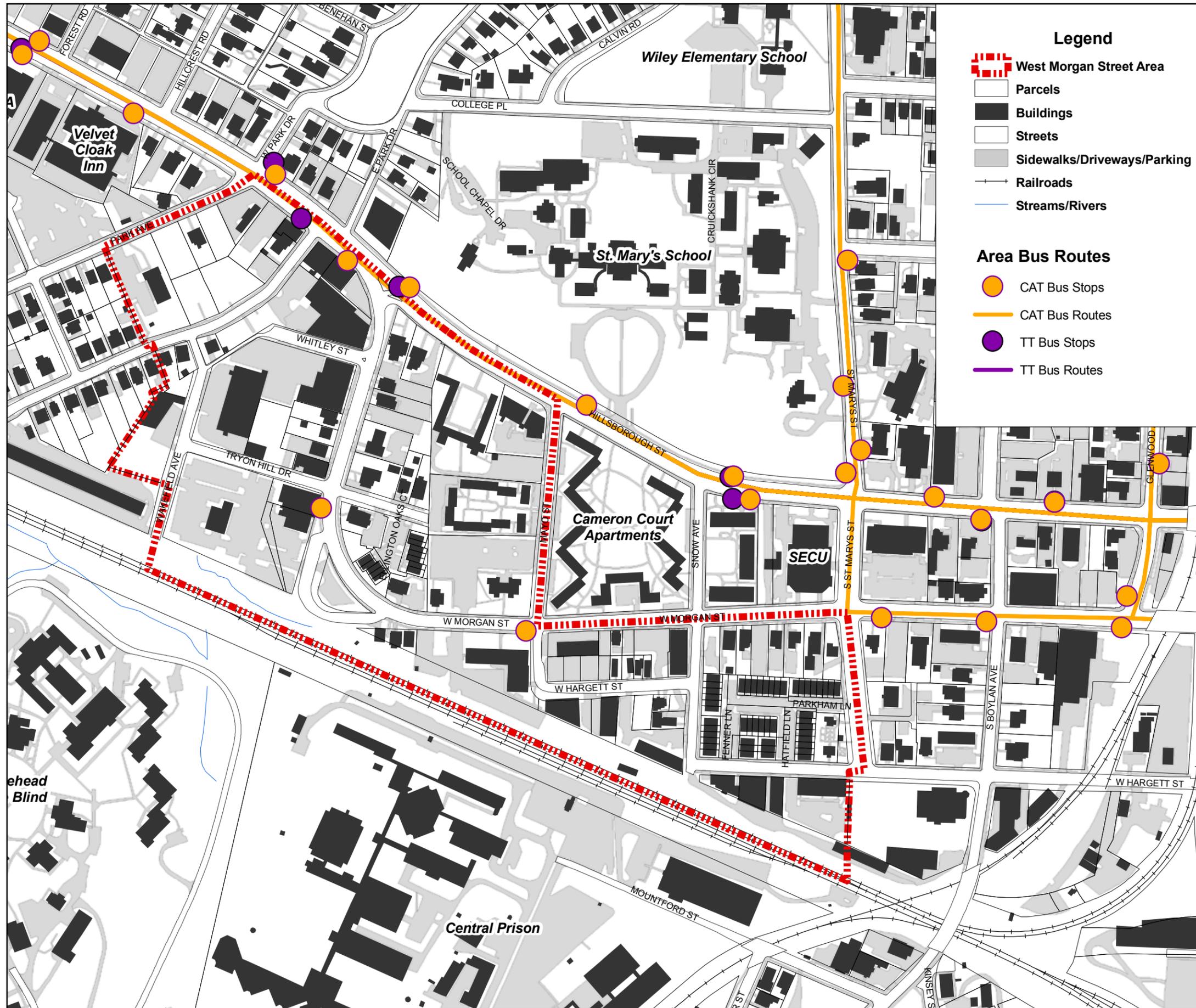
Summary of Zoning Categories in Study Area

This chart summarizes the allowable uses and characteristics of zoning districts in the study boundaries. Because most of the land within the study boundaries is not covered by an overlay district, the setback, density and parking requirements are generally suburban in nature.

Street changes as shown in Blair-Hunt-Morgan Connector Study

Traffic in the study area is generally predicted to increase between 2010 and 2035. The alternatives studied in the Blair-Hunt-Morgan study would further increase traffic and were therefore found to be undesirable. A possible connection of Morgan Street to Ashe Avenue could potentially alleviate traffic on the northern portion of Ashe Avenue, as well as divert some traffic from the Morgan-Hillsborough roundabout.



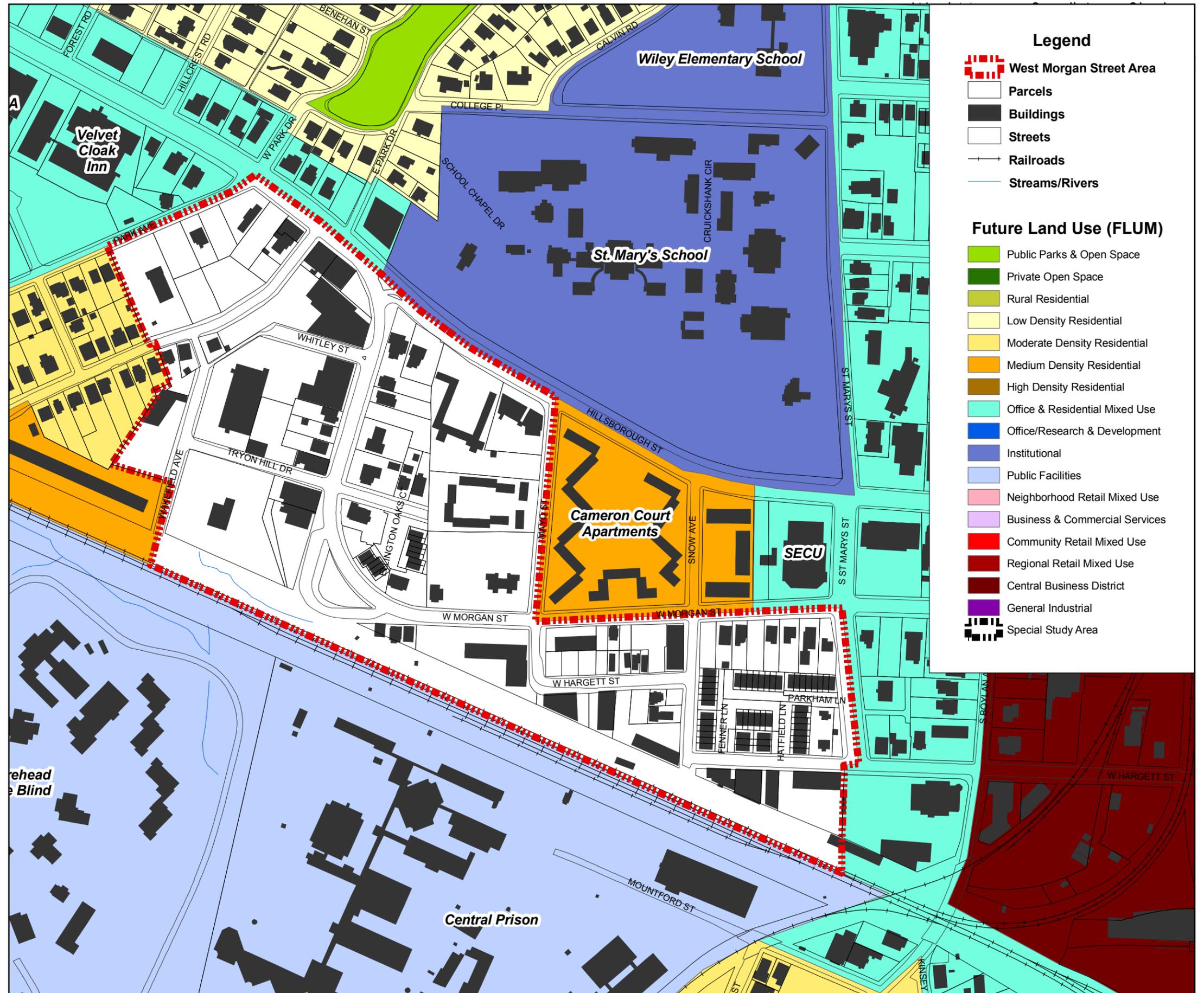


Bus Routes

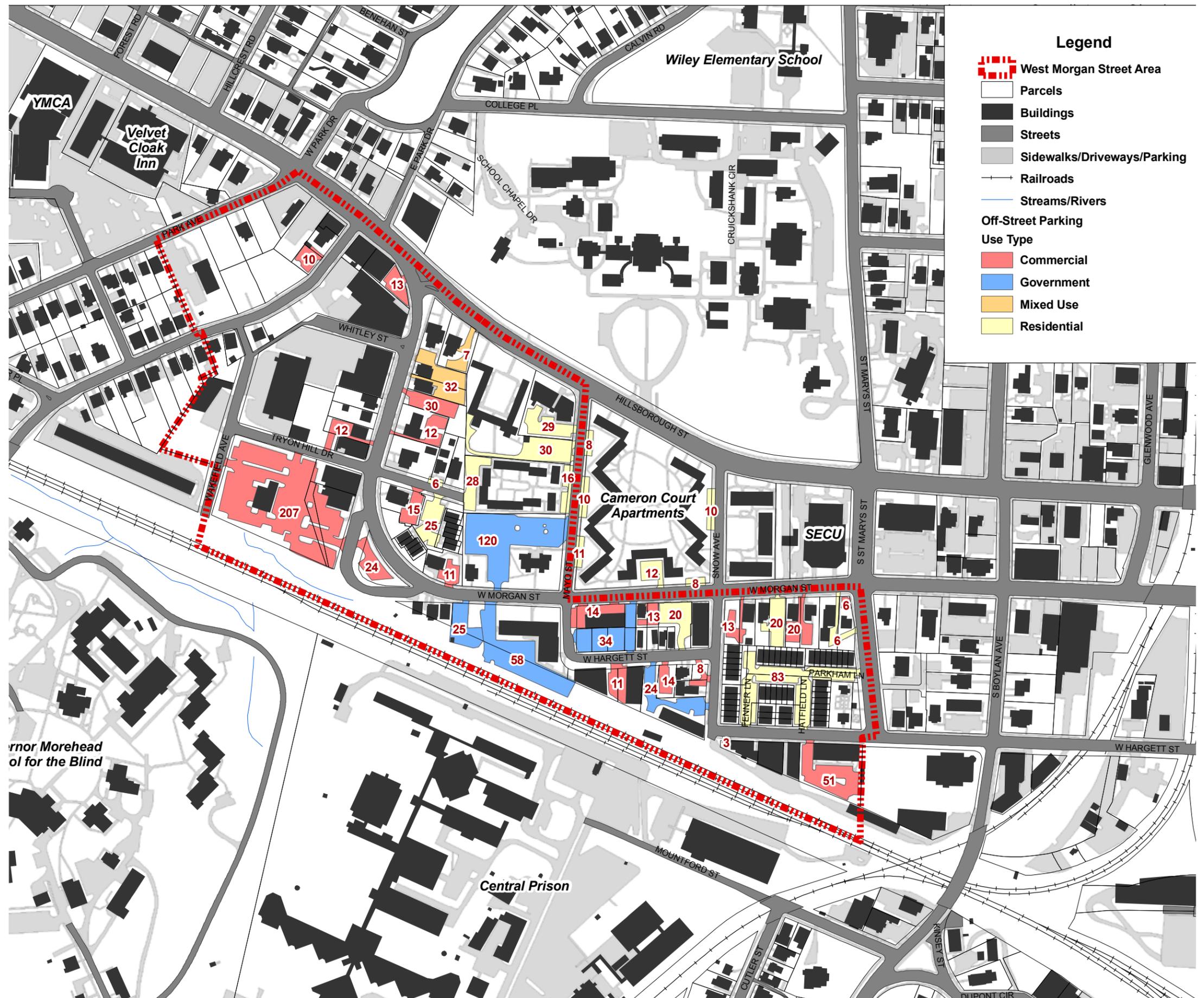
The study area is generally well served by bus, as Hillsborough Street is a prominent east-west route for both CAT and TTA. CAT routes 4 and 12 serve the study area, with access to routes 8 and 16 within walking distance. The conversion of Morgan Street to two-way traffic may increase the number of routes running directly along Morgan Street.

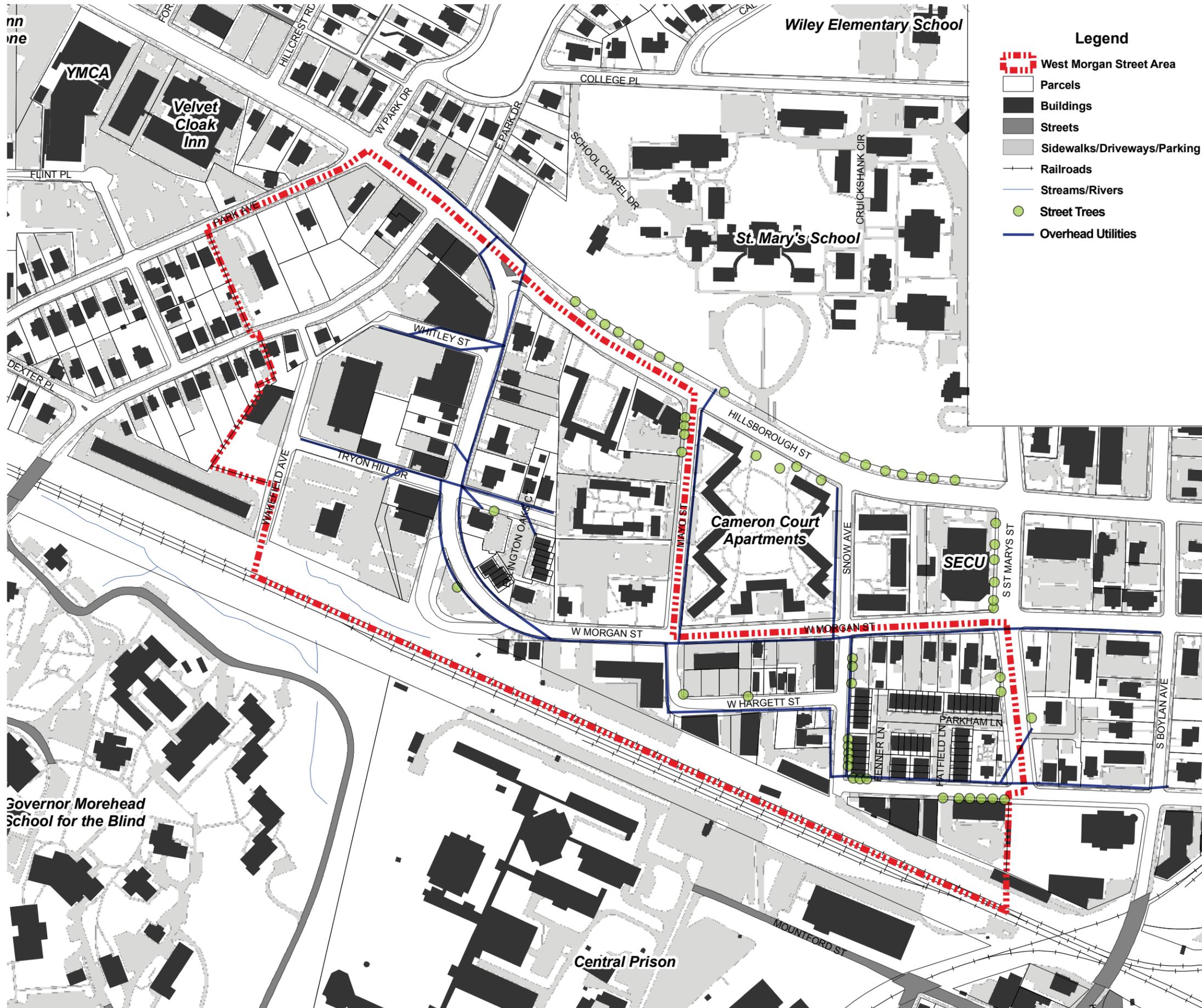
Future Land Use (From 2030 Comprehensive

The West Morgan Study area boundaries are identical to the "white space"- the area on the Future Land Use Map that does not have an identified future land use. The areas adjacent to study area feature several different future land uses, including moderate and medium density residential, institutional and office residential mixed use.



Off Street Parking (By Land Use)





Overhead Utilities Street Trees and Walkways

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Cameron Court Apartments, a 3 story apartment complex viewed from Hillsborough Street.



Large houses on the south side of Hillsborough Street adjacent to the Velvet Cloak Inn. The streetscape features large mature street trees.

Central Prison, with freight train and surface parking lot in foreground



State Employees Credit Union office building as viewed from Hillsborough Street.

St. Mary's School faculty housing-new construction that addresses Hillsborough Street and includes a front yard fence with gate.



The Velvet Cloak Inn as viewed from Hillsborough Street. The Inn features 2 buildings, with the taller structure set back from the street.

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3 story mixed use structure at the corner of Ashe Ave and Hillsborough St. The

building features small ground floor retailers with apartments above.



Two story mixed use structure on West Morgan St. The ground floor features office/commercial space, and the upper floor is apartments. The grade change results in the structure being 3 stories as it faces W. Hargett Street.

BJAC Architecture offices on W. Hargett Street- an adaptive reuse of an industrial/warehouse structure



Charlie Goodnights building, a one and two story structure on West Morgan Street. Due to grade change, the structure is 3 stories at the back, with a bar accessed from the back entrance.

1001 Hillsborough Street- a 3 story condominium building. The buildings are set back from the street with a gated front garden.



Two story brick office building that serves as offices for the Division of Prisons. The structure is set far back from West Morgan Street and features 2 mature trees in the front yard, and an abundance of surface parking to the side and rear.

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One story residential structure being used as offices for the Division of Prisons on West Morgan St.



Three story historic residential structure with one story commercial structure appendage at the corner of Ashe Ave and Hillsborough St. These buildings are known as the Greenhouse and Jackpot.

Narrow lot single family homes on the north side of W. Hargett St. Parking lot entrance and 3 story commercial structure are visible at the end of the street.



2.5 story residential structures on the east side of W. Morgan Street that are used as offices. Note the significant grade change from the sidewalk to the front door.

Parking lot and commercial structures as viewed from Wakefield Ave. From this perspective one can see the significant grade change between Wakefield Ave and W. Morgan St. The 3 story rear face of the Charlie Goodnights building is visible at the rear of the parking lot.



Vacant 1.5 story commercial/industrial structure at the Morgan/Hillsborough roundabout. St. Mary's School faculty housing is visible on the north side of Hillsborough St.

**West Morgan Small Area Study
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Sidewalk on western side of W. Morgan St. adjacent to Irregardless Cafe. Sidewalk is approximately 5 ft wide with no street trees and several curb cuts. On street parking is allowed.



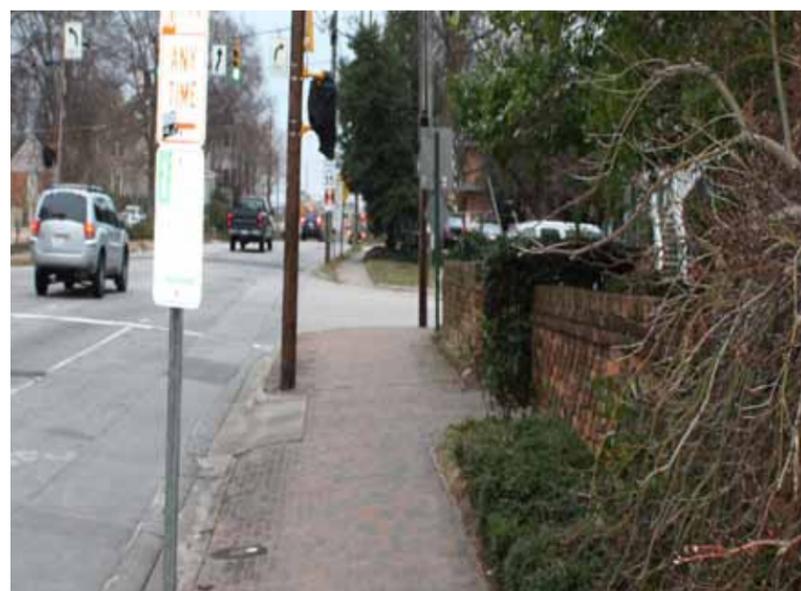
Sidewalk on the western side of Ashe Ave. Sidewalk is approximately 5 ft wide with a grass strip and adjacent commercial structures. There are no street trees and no on-street parking.

Sidewalk on the southern side of W. Morgan St. near the West Morgan Center. Sidewalk is approximately 5 ft wide with no planting strip or street trees, and large curb cuts. On street parking is allowed, but limited due to driveways and intersections.



Sidewalk on the south side of Hillsborough St. at the intersection of Ashe Ave. This is the widest sidewalk in the study area, with on street parking allowed, but no street trees or planting areas.

Sidewalk on the west side of Ashe Ave. Sidewalk features a small grass strip and less than 5 ft sidewalk in poor repair.



Sidewalk on the south side of W. Morgan St. at the intersection of St. Mary's St. sidewalk is less than 5 ft. wide and is brick. On street parking is allowed, and there are no street trees.

**West Morgan Small Area Study
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Gravel parking lot between W. Morgan St. and W. Hargett St. The lot is generally used by residents of the adjacent apartments and Cameron Court.



Large asphalt parking lot behind Charlie Goodnights as seen from Wakefield Ave. Parking lot is visible from Wakefield Ave., Tryon Hill Dr, and portions of W. Morgan St.

Large asphalt parking lot adjacent to W. Morgan St. that is reserved for employees of the Division of Prisons. There are grassy areas separating the parking lots from the sidewalk, but no vertical buffers.



Large asphalt parking lot adjacent to Charlie Goodnights as seen from W. Morgan St. This parking lot is connected to the one shown in the image above.

Asphalt parking lot between two office buildings on the south side of W. Hargett St. Parking is not screened from the right of way. Construction at Central Prison is visible in the distance.



Small asphalt parking lot adjacent to the Morgan-Hillsborough roundabout. The lot has no buffer or wheel stops separating it from the adjacent sidewalk. The parking lot serves the adjacent restaurant and retail on Hillsborough St.

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W. Hargett St. facing east. The street is approximately 3 lanes wide, with no striping and on-street parking allowed.



Wakefield Dr. facing south. The street is approximately 2 lanes wide plus on street parking on both sides, with no sidewalk and no striping.



W. Morgan St. as viewed from the Morgan-Hillsborough roundabout. The street is currently 2 lanes, with room for an additional lane and on-street parking. The Street will be converted to two-way traffic when the roundabout opens.



W. Morgan St. facing south as seen from Whitley St.



Mayo St. facing north. Mayo St. is a one lane one-way southbound street with no striping. There is on-street parking on both sides and sidewalks on the east side and portions of the west, and additional head-in parking on both the east and west sides.



W. Morgan St. as seen from the parking area at the western curve. The street is two lanes wide with room for on-street parking on the south side and excess width in the outer lane. This street will be converted to two-way traffic when the Morgan-Hillsborough roundabout opens.

